

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 ISO-00 /010 W

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R 110802Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6172

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0492

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, MA

SUBJ: EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE: BUDGET PLANNING LEVELS

FOR FY75.

REF: STATE 71630

FOR: ASSISTANT SECRETARIES EASUM AND RICHARDSON

BEGIN SUMMARY: URGENTLY REQUEST FY75 EXCHANGE PERSONS BUDGET ALLOCATION BE RASIED FROM DEPT'S PROPOSED \$35,000 TO PARA RECOMMENDATION OF \$60,000. WE BELIEVE LATTER FIGURE FAR MORE COMPATIBLE WITH LEVEL OF US INTERESTS IN MADAGASCAR (COMPARED WITH MANY OTHER AF COUNTRIES). PROPOSED \$35,000 WOULD CONFINE PROGRAM TO EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE, VIRTUALLY ELIMINATING ANY POSSIBILITY FOR CONTINUATION OF LEADER GRANT PROGRAM WHICH HAS PROVED SUCH VALUABLE TOOL ON BEHALF US INTERESTS HERE DURING PAST TWO YEARS. END SUMMARY.

1. URGENTLY REQUEST YOUR PERSONAL RECONSIDERATION OF FY75 EDUCATION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE BUDGET LEVEL FOR MADAGASCAR. PARA PAPER FOR MADAGASCWR (TANA'S A-045, 19MAR) RECOMMENDS \$60,000 FOR THIS PURPOSE, BUT REFTEL PROVIDES ONLY \$35,000.

2. SINCE DEPT'S ADOPTION OF PARA SYSTEM SEEMS MEAN BY VERY NATURE OF TERM THAT RESOURCE ALLOCATION WOULD BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LEVEL OF US INTERESTS TO BE PROMOTED AND PROTECTED, I FIND IT DIFFICULT UNDERSTAND WHY TANANARIVE IS PLACED IN SAME BUDGET CATEGORY AS SERIES POSTS TO WHICH REFTEL SENT. US HAS CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE INTERESTS IN MADAGASCAR LED BY NASA

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STATION (TOGETHER WITH OTHERS LISTED IN PARA PAPER), WHEREAS

IN MOST OTHER COUNTRIES TO WHICH REFTEL SENT IT IS, I BELIEVE,
DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY MUCH, IF ANYTHING, IN THE WAY OF CONCRETE
US INTERESTS.

3. I KNOW THAT COMPARISONS ARE USUALLY ODOUS, BUT IT ALSO STRIKES ME AS STRANGE THAT, WHICH EXCEPTION MALAWI AND GAMBIA, REFTEL IS NOT ADDRESSED TO ANY AF POST IN WHICH LANGUAGE IS PRIMARILY ENGLISH. I ASSUME THIS MEANS THAT VIRTUALLY ALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE POSTS ARE PLACED IN HIGHER BUDGET CATEGORY, BUT, IF SO, ON WHAT RATIONALE? SPEAKING OF ENGLISH DOES NOT STRIKE ME AS BEING A US INTEREST IN ITSELF, PARTICULARLY SINCE SOME AF COUNTRIES SPEAKING ENGLISH ARE AMONG THOSE MOST INIMICAL TO US INTERESTS. MOREVOER, IT IS HARD FOR ME TO COME UP WITH A SPECIFIC US INTEREST IN CERTAIN OF THESE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES.

4. LIMIT OF \$35,000 PROPOSED BY DEPT FOR MADAGASCAR WILL CONFINE OUR FY75 PROGRAM TO ONE AMERICAN PROFESSOR AND THREE MALAGASY STUDENTS. THESE ARE POLITICALLY VERY HELPFUL SINCE GOMR AND PARTICULARLY FONMIN RATSIKAKA HAVE MADE CLEAR HOW MUCH IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM US. THIS FACT HAS BEEN FURTHER EMPHASIZED BY POLITICAL DECISION JUST TAKEN BY GOMR, AGAIN ON RATSIKAKA'S INITIATIVE, TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN US AFGRAD PROGRAM, DESPITE DRAIN IMPOSED ON TERRIBLY TIGHT BUDGET AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESOURCES BY PAYMENT OF EXPENSIVE TRANSPORT COSTS TO AND FROM US FOR MALAGASY STUDENTS.

5. BUT \$35,000 LIMIT WILL ALLOW VIRTUALLY NOTHING FOR CONTINUATION IN FY75 OF LEADER GRANT PROGRAM. IN PAST TWO YEARS SINCE RESUMPTION OF CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH GOMR, THESE GRANTS HAVE BEEN EXCELLENTLY USED TO FURTHER US INTERESTS. JUST TO CITE ONE EXAMPLE, AS ASST SECY EASUM WELL KNOWS FROM RECENT TRAFFIC, NOTHING HAS SERVED US INTERESTS BETTER THAN PARTIAL LEADER GRANT MADE LAST FALL TO GEN ANDRIAMAHAZO. WE HAVE SIMILARLY FIRST-RATE LIST OF CANDIDATES TO PROPOSE FOR FY75, PLUS CARRYOVER OF ONE OR TWO CANDIDATES WHO MAY NOT BE FUNDED IN FY74. THESE ARE REASONS WE ASKED IN PARA PAPER FOR \$60,000 -- TO ALLOW US SIX-SEVEN LEADER GRANTS IN FY75.

6. I HOPE YOU WILL NOT ANSWER BY TELLING US TO TRUST TO FALL-
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OUT. AFTER MY TALK LAST DEC WITH ASST SECY RICHARDSON AND HIS COLLEAGUES I WAS HOPEFUL AND OPTIMISTIC THAT FALLOUT WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY ADD TO OUR FY74 BUDGET. BUT ALL WE HAVE GOTTEN SO FAR IS ADDITIONAL \$400 (FOR WHICH WE ARE GRATEFUL, BUT IT DOES NOT GIVE US MUCH TO DEPEND UPON).

7. I KNOW FUNDS AS ALWAYS ARE TIGHT. IF I MAY PUT FORTH ONE SUGGESTION WHICH MIGHT HELP, I WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE MADAGASCAR

FOREGO THE FOUR-FIVE REGIONAL PROJECT GRANTS IT SEEMS TO GET ANNUALLY IF EQUIVALENT AMOUNT COULD BE ADDED TO OUR BILATERAL PROGRAM. BASED ON EXPERIENCE HERE, REGIONAL PROJECTS ARE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO TIE TO US INTERESTS THAN BILATERAL PROJECTS. PEOPLE PICKED FOR REGIONAL GRANTS ARE EITHER SO YOUNG OR STILL SO FAR DOWN THE LINE THAT WE HAVE LITTLE ROLE IN THEIR SELECTION AND IT IS EXTREMELY QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THEY WILL EVER SERVE US INTERESTS VERY MUCH. I SUSPECT SAME WEAKNESSES WITH RESPECT REGIONAL PROJECTS EXIST IN OTHER COUNTRIES ALSO.

8. WE VERY GRATEFUL FOR FY76 BUDGET ALLOCATION OF \$70,000
(STATE 72431).

MENDENHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL EXCHANGE, FOREIGN LEADER EXCHANGE, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE APPROPRIATIONS, BUDGET ESTIMATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TANANA00492
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740084-0540
From: TANANARIVE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740447/aaaabqge.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 71630
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <10 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE: BUDGET PLANNING LEVELS FOR FY75.
TAGS: SCUL, AFIN, MA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005